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Japan PM seeks united line with Obama

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Japan's new conservative Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Thursday started a visit to the United States in which he hopes to show a firm, unified line to an assertive China and a defiant North Korea.

Abe holds his first meeting today with President Barack Obama at a time of growing tensions between Japan and China, which is seen as challenging Tokyo's control over strategic islands, and days after a nuclear test by Pyongyang.

Fresh from a convincing December election victory and with high approval ratings, Abe has taken small steps toward a harder Japanese stance including moving to step up military spending by the officially pacifist state.

Danny Russel, Obama's top advisor on Asia, said that the United States wanted a diplomatic solution to ease tensions but also reiterated a veiled warning to China over contested islands in the East China Sea.

Obama "remains supportive of the peaceful efforts to

find diplomatic resolution to outstanding issues of territorial claims," Russel told reporters on a conference call.

Obama has also "been clear in the United States' opposition to coercive actions or unilateral steps that threaten the stability of the region," he said.

Russel said that the United States wanted to avoid "miscalculation" between China and Japan, saying that the world's second and third largest economies were leading a region that is "the driver of growth and dynamism."

Abe's visit comes one month after then secretary of state Hillary Clinton stepped up the tone, warning Beijing not to challenge Japan's control over the islands known as the Senkakus in Japanese and the Diaoyu in Chinese.

The remarks by Clinton, a forceful advocate for a greater US focus on Asia, triggered a reprimand from China but heartened Abe's government which has counted on a united front with the United States.

Visitors and islanders enjoy an Aruban encounter filled with swirling skirts and smiles



The Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) and Club Kibrahacha 60+ were very pleased to welcome a contingent of square dancing fanatics off the Adventure of the Seas yesterday morning for a hootenanny, Aruba style.

The Nasser-Hunter Group, which organizes cruises for lovers of square dancing from around the world, were bussed to the center from the Oranjestad terminal comple-

ment of Arubus, Aruba's official mass transit provider. Arubus and Centro Kibrahacha also provided transport for retirees from fifteen other centers dedicated to providing activities and social stimulation for Aruba's elderly. Over 350 islanders filled Kibrahacha's main courtyard, and Director Diana Uchtmann welcomed Prime Minister Eman and Minister of Public Health and Education, Dr. Richard Visser, who also came to observe this charming event.

MC for the day was local square dancing enthusiast, Jubi Naar, who did some calling in Papiamento. It was v-

eran caller and co-founder of the group, Nasser Shukayr, however, who set the pace, often accompanied by his wife Jeanne.

Square dancing cruise passengers participating in this most delightful encounter hailed from Canada, all over the U.S., England and Sweden, many garbed in enchanting outfits they had sewn for themselves and their partners. Mr. Shukayr explained he has been doing these cruises for twelve years; this year they have 96 dancers joining them on the ship, with 56 enjoying this authentic Aruban excursion.

Continued on pg 4



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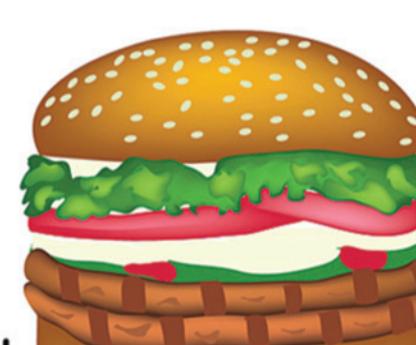
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Bobby's commitment with Aruba: Continuing his family's tradition



In today's article, the Aruba Tourism Authority is continuing their promotional campaign focusing on different personalities in the community who has a particular commitment with our tourism. The focus today is on Bobby Dollison.

Bobby Dollison from San Nicolaas is committed to Aruba and our tourism. Today he is the operator of the famous "Saco di Felipe" business begun 65 years ago by his grandfather.

Bobby reports that they

prepare fresh, delicious food every day at a good price.

"Saco di Felipe" is known for the very best Johnny Cakes on the island, served either with ribs or chicken and fried plantains, and all this in a paper bag!

As the third generation of the family of Saco Felipe in Aruba, Bobby retired as a police sergeant in New York, and decided to return to his native Aruba and continue the family business. In 2006 Bobby began as a cook with his uncle who was selling the

traditional Johnny Cakes as a "take-out" in the very same location where his grandfather began, but they called it "Saco Coki." However, in 2007, when his uncle died, Bobby decided to continue the tradition as 'Saco di Felipe.'

Bobby reports enjoying it when his customers enjoy his food. That is what makes me contented he said.

"When a tourist comes and buy my food, enjoy it and recommends others, that makes me feel very satisfied," says Bobby.

Locals as well as tourists are known to come from all over the island specially for this meal in a bag.

Bobby recounts with a smile that, it would be a great honor to his family that the plaza will be reconstructed for the Barrio of the Village; and that it would be dedicated to his grandfather. The area will be named Plaza Felipe.

Bobby tells the story of a gentleman who came to his business during the recent Balloon Parade and told him how happy he was to see that the Saco di Felipe still exists. This gentleman was a regular customer of more than 55 years ago. He was able to share many stories regarding his grandfather Felipe.

Bobby says that..."My commitment to Aruba is to make certain that our people are contented. And, we are in this business to provide for our clients with love and dedication...that is the secret behind the Saco di Felipe."

Bobby is yet another one of Aruba's dedicated supporters of our tourism!

Interesting lecture at Dementia Café CasMarie on FEB.27th

Dementia is a subject that in recent years received a lot of attention on Aruba; however, it is not enough! The impact of the disease is enormous and affects more than just the immediate family.

Dementia is not merely a problem of memory. It reduces the ability to learn reason, retain or recall past experience and there is also loss of patterns of thoughts, feelings and activities. Additional mental and behavioral problems often affect people who have dementia, and may influence quality of life of the patient, caregivers and immediate families. The impact is enormous and mostly underestimated.

That is why it is so important that you are aware of the right recommendations and possibilities in the diagnosis of dementia. For questions about the disease or handling advice you can always contact CasMarie Foundation.

Do you want to use or learn more about any of our other services, please contact CasMarie the phone number 5696910.

On Wednesday, February 27, there will be a Dementia Café event at CasMarie by Spirit of Aruba. **Spirit of Aruba** offers life coaching, workshops and training for your personal development including Mindfulness Training, Universal Leadership program, Meditation & Yoga Workshops, Family Constellations

Our guest speakers, care giver of people with dementia, will be with us to discuss how this disease got into their lives and changed it; what adjustments in lifestyle is needed and where do the caregivers get the force to continue.

Date: February 27, 2013

Time: 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm

Location: Spirit of Aruba

Theme: Caregivers of the word.

Persons interested to use or learn more about any of Dementia Café CasMarie other services, please contact CasMarie at tel.: 5696910.

For registration or more information please call: 5696910 or visit their Face book page Dementia Café CasMarie

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SETAR holds important Business Event to celebrate 10th year



SETAR just recently held their 9th Business Event at the Westin Aruba Resort & Casino. Director Roland Croes was the first to speak and gave an elaborate presentation of past activities in 2012 and shared some of SETAR's plans for 2013.

It has become a tradition now for SETAR to hold these sessions where clients and strategic partners come together and SETAR using this opportunity to thank them for their support over the past year. They are also kept abreast of what is going on in the world of telecommunications and what the company is doing in general.

For this particular occasion, they invited Simon T. Bailey to speak to the invited audience. Bailey is a leader who teaches people how to bring leadership to organizations to make organizations shine through giving the best possible experience to clients. In a rather dynamic fashion, Bailey gave his presentation. He emphasized the importance of those small things that can change the perception of the customer.

Following Bailey's formidable presentation, the evening continued with a reception, during which time invitees took advantage of the networking opportunities. SETAR also raffled a variety of attractive prizes among those present. All in all this was an excellent celebration of SETAR's 10th anniversary as an NV.



Combat Dengue

Keep around your house and yard clean

Happy Island Girls Redux!



An annual ritual that is always a pleasure is to snap a shot of the merry group of vacationers that we at THE MORNING NEWS have dubbed "The Happy Island Girls." A more jolly and pleasant little "Aruban Club" is hard to find.

These ladies hail from all parts of the U.S., but met around the beach and pool of the Renaissance Beach Suites over a decade ago. They have made it a practice to have their picture taken together; each year Lynn Niebling of Vermont has the photo from the previous year emblazoned on a tee shirt or tank top, which they display proudly.

Joining the group over the years have been their offspring, such as Debbie Rohe, the daughter of Audrey Houser and daughter-in-law of Joanne Rohe. Karen Ballard, the daughter of Marlene Lensky has returned to Aruba for her second visit to join the girls. "I just couldn't stay

home in the cold while Mom and Dad were going to Aruba!" Rounding out the 2013 gathering is Rosalee Licita. Among them they have countless grandchildren (one has 22, from her four children, "They were a very busy bunch," she admits,) with great-grandchild number nine

on the way.

Their time in Aruba together, anywhere from two weeks to a month, is very precious to them, as well as seeing a photo in the paper of their one happy group on One Happy Island!

By Rosalie Klein



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Visitors and islanders enjoy an Aruban encounter filled with swirling skirts and smiles

Continued from pg 1

of Kibrahacha worked out the logistics of expanding the encounter to welcome members of social centers from around the island. After a brief demonstration of the art by the visiting group and an introduction to square dancing commands, which is a language all its own, members of the audience were invited to pair with the experienced dancers. Minister Dr. Visser was an eager volunteer, proving quite adept at mastering the difference between an allemande and a dosado. He thanked the Nassar-Hunter Group for their time and affirmed square dancing is just the sort of pastime he would like to see more widely integrated into programs on Aruba for the "young at heart," to keep them active, healthy and mentally alert.

By Rosalie Klein

Most of the islanders they met and danced with yesterday morning have little or almost no contact with vacationers, but dancing is a common ground for forming friendships.

It was Jeffrey Kaufman of the Club Sashy Group out of Philadelphia who initiated the project with the ATA. There was enthusiastic response

from the tourism entity and Kibrahacha center, and aided by students from the University of Aruba, Jeffrey Matos

Law prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace to be implemented on Aruba!



The Aruba Parliament has begun deliberations on changes in our civil code. One of the changes has to do with the phenomenon of sexual harassment in the workforce.

The law regarding sexual harassment will not distinguish poor sexual behavior between male and female, yet most often it is the female who becomes the victim. The person who commits sexual harassment will be punishable by law, however, there is a change in the direction of the employer.

The new law states that the employer must ensure that the employee is not exposed to any kind of behavior

or action that relates to their sex. The employer must ensure that the dignity of the employee is never violated by an atmosphere of intimidation, hostility, or humiliation on the job.

Reference is made to any type of verbal acts, or physical acts with any sexual connotation.

While there may be no type of guide to deal with sexual harassment on the job, the employer is advised to make a counselor available, or to have an office where complaints can be registered. The consequence of sexual harassment makes the atmosphere on the job very difficult for the victim.

The government's goal with the introduction of this law is to try to avoid and prevent acts of this nature.

Employees should be able to go to work everyday without the feeling that their honor or dignity will be violated by a boss or colleague, simply to try and not lose their job.

According to Minister Winklaar-Hooyboer, with the change in the law, the director of companies will be obliged to avoid all types of unpleasant behavior on the job. They must act as soon as a complaint is made.



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New navy ship to arrive in Aruba's port today!

After a nice reception in Curaçao the newest warship of the Dutch Royal Navy will arrive this morning in Aruba. Today sails the new station ship, HMS Friesland for the first time in the Oranjestad Harbor; a maritime historical event not to be missed.

The brand new boat will be received between 8.30 and 9.00 am with a military ceremony. This is done with 21 cannon shots. The salute will be partly fired in front of the Governor residence on the beach adjacent to the Wilhelmina Park.

At 9:00 a.m. the ship itself will fire the last cannon shots between the breakwaters in honor of the Governor of Aruba and the Dutch Kingdom. Governor, FJ Refunjol, together with the Commandant of the Marine Savaneta Marine Camp, Lieutenant Colonel



The HNLMS Friesland

Edwin Hofma, will be on the beach to receive the salute. An armed guard, provided by a platoon of the Marine Corps, will pay homage to the ship from the Wilhelmina Park.

Navy's 525 year

This impressive ceremonial arrival is a naval tradition but this time has it has extra value because of another historical

fact; the Royal Navy is celebrating this year its 525 anniversary. The theme of this celebration is innovation, which is additionally emphasized in the Caribbean with the arrival of this latest naval vessel.

Worldwide compatibility

The HNLMS Friesland was officially placed in service by

Minister Hennis-Plasschaert in late January and now it will start operating the Caribbean. The 108-meter long ship, one of four new Holland class Ocean Going Patrol Vessels, is used worldwide for various tasks: from coastguard tasks, disaster relief, anti-drug operations to combating piracy. In the next four months the Friesland will serve in the Caribbean as a station ship for the Royal Navy and the Caribbean Coast Guard.

Duties in Caribbean

The ship and crew are ready for their duties as station ship for the Caribbean. On their journey here, the crew received an intensive training in order to be well prepared for the tasks in the field of humanitarian aid. The patrol ship is also well-equipped to combat illegal practices at sea.

The Friesland will have a 'Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) from the U.S. Coast Guard on board for counter drugs matters outside the territorial waters. A Coast Guard boarding team will take care for operations within the territorial waters. A marine team of the Friesland will ensure security of the coastguard and staff when boarding a ship.

The Friesland will sail during these days under the command of the Caribbean Coast Guard and will patrol within the territorial waters of the Kingdom Islands to ensure safety at sea. The crew consists of 55 persons, but can be extended with specialists to a maximum of 90 heads. The Friesland has 2 FRISC type speed vessels and is equipped with a Belgian Alouette helicopter.

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US wine exports hit record \$1.4 bn in 2012



WASHINGTON (AFP) - US wine exports uncorked a record year in 2012, bringing in \$1.43 billion in revenues as demand grew in Germany, Sweden, Japan and China, the Wine Institute said Thursday.

Wine exports -- 90 percent from California -- rose by 2.6 percent, the third year in a row of increases, said the San Francisco-based institute, which represents the California wine industry.

Volume shipments reached 424.6 million liters, or 112.2 million cases, last year, a slight slowdown from 2011 shipments of 425.5 million liters (47.3 million cases).

"California wine exports continue to increase because of our quality, diversity and value, despite a highly competitive global market, significant trade barriers and a still recovering economy," Robert Koch, the institute's president and chief executive, said in a statement.

"We've worked to create more opportunities to export our wines by supporting our government in opening markets with free-trade agreements and other negotiations," Koch said.

The 27-country European Union was the top market for California wines, with sales rising 1.7 percent to \$485 million, the San Francisco-based Wine Institute said.

Exports to Germany were up 6 percent from 2011, and 14 percent to Sweden, where sales were mostly red wine.

In Britain, California wine exports grew by 2.8 percent in value while France, Italy, Spain, Australia, Chile and South Africa all lost ground, said John McLaren, the institute's director for the United Kingdom.

Obama jabs Republicans over tax cuts for rich



WASHINGTON (AFP) - President Barack Obama on Thursday said the only thing keeping Republicans together was a desire to shield the rich from higher taxes, in a new jab over an imminent budget confrontation.

Obama is mounting a full bore campaign push to heap blame on Republicans over a multi-billion dollar package of automatic spending cuts due to hammer the US economy on March 1.

The president wants to replace the cuts with a balanced set of spending cuts and revenue hikes obtained by closing tax loopholes, but Republicans in Congress are resisting the idea of higher taxes.

"My sense is that their basic view is that nothing is important enough to raise taxes on wealthy individuals or corporations," Obama said, adding that Republicans prefer spending cuts even though they could slow economic growth.

"That's the thing that binds their party together at this point," the president told the liberal Al Sharpton radio show.

"I think Republicans right now have been so dug in on this notion of never raising taxes that it becomes difficult for them to see an obvious answer right in front of them."

Republicans, who lost a previous showdown with Obama over raising tax rates for the rich, say the debate over hiking taxes is closed.

They say they are willing to close loopholes, but only in the context of a sweeping reform of the tax code, and maintain that Obama wants to use proceeds from any immediate revenue rises to hike government spending.

As time runs out before the so-called "sequester" cuts hit, Obama called Republican Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker John Boehner Wednesday, though the White House gave no details of the talks.

Cuts due on March 1 would slash defense spending by \$55 billion and non-defense discretionary spending by \$27 billion this year.

Biden warns anti-gun control lawmakers US is 'with us'

NEW YORK (AFP) - Just miles from the site of the Newtown school massacre, Vice President Joe Biden warned Thursday that US politicians would pay a price if they refuse to back measures to stem gun violence.

Biden said in Danbury, Connecticut that there had been a change in American politics which made it less risky for lawmakers to back the kind of legislation the White House is pushing Congress to pass.

"What I say to my colleagues who will watch this and listen to this, I say to you if you're concerned about your political survival, you should be concerned about the survival of our children," Biden said.

"And guess what? I believe the price to be paid politically will be to those who refuse to act, who refuse to step forward, because America has changed on this issue," Biden said.

"You should all know the American people are with us. You should all know there's a moral price to be paid for in-

action," said Biden, speaking only 10 miles (16 kilometers) from Newtown.

Biden has led the administration's effort to frame a plan to cut down on gun violence since America was left reeling from the horrific killings of 20 children and six adults by a gunman in Newtown in December.

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International News

20 killed as bomb blasts hit India's Hyderabad



HYDERABAD (AFP) - At least 20 people were killed and more than 50 wounded when bombs ripped through a crowded suburb of the Indian city of Hyderabad on Thursday in what police called an act of terrorism.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh vowed punishment of those responsible for the "dastardly act", which came with the nation on alert after the recent hanging of a separatist unleashed protests in the Muslim-majority region of Kashmir.

The bombs targeted a mainly Hindu district in Hyderabad, a southern hub of India's computing industry

which has a large Muslim population. The Australian and Indian cricket teams are due to play there in a match starting on March 2.

Doctors struggled to treat a stream of wounded victims as bloodied patients lay on stretchers at nearby hospitals and anguished relatives clamoured for news of their loved ones, an AFP photographer saw.

At least two devices went off in the evening explosions, and bomb-disposal experts were trying to defuse three more unexploded devices, police said.

Twenty people died in the attack and 54 people were

wounded, 35 seriously, he said.

Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai, the top civil servant in India's external affairs ministry, said the culprits were not known but did not rule out foreign involvement.

The foreign secretary avoided direct criticism of nuclear-armed rival Pakistan, which New Delhi blamed for the 2008 Mumbai attacks in which 166 people were killed when Pakistani-born gunmen laid siege to the city.

Hyderabad police said there had been three explosions, but Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde said he could only confirm two.

He said Indian authorities had received "intelligence inputs in the (recent) days about the possibility of attacks and this information was shared with other states".

Police said the blasts went off in quick succession.

While Hindus form the majority of the population in Hyderabad, one of India's largest and most historic cities, there is a large community of Muslims living in the old quarter.

Ex-priest pedophile found hanging in Bolivia

LA PAZ (AFP) - A former Catholic priest convicted of abusing children was found dead hanging in his home in Bolivia, police said Thursday.

Eduardo Revich was found guilty of abusing 18 children and sentenced to 15 years prison in April 2011. He was serving his sentence under house arrest as he appealed the ruling.

Revich was found hanging in the town of Tarabuco, said Mario Moyano, the head of police for

the Chuquisaca region. "One of the first theories is that he took his own life," Moyano said.

Revich had been sentenced for abusing the minors when he headed a Catholic charity center for poor youths and infants between 2002 and 2007.

After the charges were filed the Church closed down the youth center and suspended Revich.

According to the Catholic radio station Fides, Revich was facing new abuse charges.

UN rejects Haiti cholera damages claim

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - The United Nations on Thursday formally rejected massive damages claims made by lawyers after UN peacekeepers were accused of introducing a cholera epidemic to Haiti.

About 8,000 people have died in the epidemic but UN

spokesman Martin Nesirky said the global body had told lawyers the damages claim was "non-receivable" under a 1946 convention laying out the UN's immunities for its actions.

Certain health experts have said the cholera epidemic, which erupted in late 2010, was introduced to Haiti by Nepalese peacekeepers. The United Nations has never acknowledged responsibility, insisting it was impossible to pinpoint blame definitively.

Lawyers for the families of some of the dead and the 635,000 people estimated to have been made sick by the cholera had predicted a damages award could cost the UN more than one billion dollars.

Haiti's ex-dictator 'Baby Doc' Duvalier a no-show in court

PONT-AU-PRINCE (AFP) - Former Haitian dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier failed to appear in court on Thursday to hear whether he will face charges over human rights abuses.

Lawyers acting for alleged victims of Duvalier's regime had hoped the judge in Thursday's appeal court hearing would rule on whether the former leader can be prosecuted for alleged human rights abuses during his 15-year rule.

"It was a golden opportunity to hold an historic trial and the fact of going to the Court of Cassation will only prolong the delay," complained Jean-Joseph Exume, who is acting for the plaintiffs.

A Haitian court decided last year that too much time had passed for Duvalier to be



charged with crimes against humanity, which are protected by a statute of limitations. His alleged victims have appealed that decision.

Former opposition figures have accused him of deploying the feared Tonton Macoute militia and of complicity in

murder, torture and kidnapping.

Duvalier was the world's youngest head of state when, at the age of just 19, he succeeded his late autocratic father Francois "Papa Doc" in 1971. He was overthrown in a popular revolt in 1986 and fled to France.

He returned to Haiti two years ago after 25 years in exile.

Duvalier had initially been scheduled to appear in court on February 7, but failed to show up and instead sent a letter accusing the judge of taking the plaintiff's side and asking for the hearing to be postponed.

He objected to the original hearing date because it was the anniversary of the 1986 day when he was overthrown.



UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - Doctors for ailing Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez refused to let Bolivian President Evo Morales see his close ally when he went to Caracas this week, Morales said. The Bolivian president made a special stopover in Caracas on his way to meetings at the UN headquarters in New York. Chavez returned to Venezuela on Monday after several rounds of cancer surgery in Cuba. Widespread fears have been expressed for the life of the radical Latin American leader. Morales, Chavez and Cuba's veteran leader Fidel Castro, who stood down in 2006 for health reasons, have formed a radical alliance in Latin America, strongly critical of the United States.

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Orthodox rabbi arrested for sex assault in London: reports

LONDON (AFP) - A rabbi from an ultra-Orthodox Jewish community in London has been arrested on suspicion of sexual assault and perverting the course of justice, police and media reports said Thursday.

Police said a 54-year-old man was arrested on Wednesday, and he was named by the BBC and the online Times of Israel newspaper as Rabbi Chaim Halpern, who leads a synagogue in Golders Green in north London.

Halpern has been accused in recent months of sexually abusing women in marriage counselling sessions, which he denies, according to The Jew-

ish Chronicle newspaper.

Another three men aged 64, 62 and 25 were also arrested on Wednesday on suspicion of perverting the course of justice in relation to Halpern's arrest, which was made by Scotland Yard's sex crimes unit, Sapphire.

Halpern had in November resigned as a dayan -- senior rabbi -- of the Union of the Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, a body representing several Orthodox synagogues, following the complaints, according to The Jewish Chronicle.

He subsequently issued a statement proclaiming his innocence.

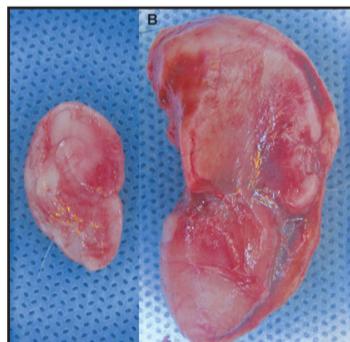
Lifelike ears created with 3D printing

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Researchers said they had engineered artificial human ears that look and act like the real thing thanks to 3D printing, giving hope to patients missing all or part of their ears.

The new ears, practically identical to human ones, could provide the solution long sought by reconstructive surgeons to treat thousands of children born with the congenital deformity microtia, along with those who suffered ear loss to cancer or in an accident.

In a study published online in the PLOS ONE journal, Cornell biomedical engineers and Weill Cornell Medical College physicians said the flexible ears grew cartilage over three months to replace the collagen used to mold them.

A high-density, injectable gel made of living cells helped fill the mold. Once the mold



removed, cartilage was grown on the collagen.

And researchers praised the speed of the process, noting it takes half a day to build the mold, about a day to print it, 30 minutes to inject the gel and the ear can be removed just 15 minutes later.

Replacement ears are usually built using materials with a foam-like consistency, or using a patient's harvest rib. But the process is often painful, especially for children, as the ears rarely look natural or perform well.

German Catholics okay 'morning-after pill' for rape victims

BERLIN (AFP) - The German Catholic Church ruled Thursday that the use of the morning-after pill was acceptable in certain cases for rape victims.

The German Bishops' Conference said in a press statement that rape victims treated in Catholic hospitals should "of course receive humane, medical, psychological and pastoral care."

"The administration of a 'morning-after pill' can be part of this so long as it has a preventative and not an abortive effect," added the bishops.

They specified: "Medical-pharmaceutical methods, which result in the death of an embryo, should continue not to be used."

German bishops said after a meeting in the western city of Trier that they trusted Catholic institutions to take the correct medical decisions "on the basis of this moral and theological guideline."

"In every case, the decision of the woman concerned must be respected," added the statement.

The bishops were considering the issue after a woman who had been raped was turned away by two Catholic hospitals in the western city of Cologne.

The Catholic Church is fundamentally opposed to contraception or abortion.

Carrot-Apple-Beet Juice -

A straightforward favorite, this juice is sweet and tasty. The beet turns the juice a cool purple color that kids love.

Prep: 10 minutes 1 small apple, cored 4 carrots 1/2 medium young beet, cut into wedges (1 cup) Scrub the produce well. Juice the apple first, then alternate juicing the carrots and the beet. Serve chilled or over ice.



Bollywood star urges 'immediate' change for women

NEW DELHI (AFP) - Bollywood star and former Miss World Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has called for "immediate" action to protect women in India following the fatal gang-rape of a student that horrified the country.

The vicious attack by a group of drunken men on a 23-year-old medical student in New Delhi two months ago in which she was raped and assaulted with an iron bar sparked outrage in India.

The appeal by the star of dozens of movies comes as Indian lawmakers are due to take up new measures to significantly tighten laws on sexual assault against women.

The 39-year-old actress -- one of India's best-known faces at home and abroad -- voiced anger over the situation of women in the country.

"There should be definite laws for offenders. They should be punished immediately. That is when we will see the change in society," said Rai Bachchan, who spoke Wednesday in New Delhi where she attended an awards ceremony.

Though gang-rapes and sexual harassment are commonplace in India, the case of the student who died of massive internal injuries touched a nerve, leading to an outpouring of criticism about treatment of women in Indian society.

"I don't feel fear. Rather there is a lot of anger and I don't hesitate to say this. Many of us are privileged to have a lot of assurance about our safety but most of the women in our country do not have that," Rai Bachchan said.

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Sci-Tech

Massive winter storm blankets central US



Spectators make their way off the course during a snow-storm during the Match Play Championship golf tournament in Marana, Arizona, yesterday.

CHICAGO (AFP) - A massive winter storm blanketed much of the central United States Thursday and looked set to keep dumping heavy snow, sleet and freezing rain for days as it makes its way slowly towards the east coast.

The National Weather service reported that as much as 15 inches (38 centimeters) of snow had fallen in parts of Colorado and New Mexico by Thursday morning and warned that many areas would get at least a foot (30 centimeters) by the time the slow-moving storm passed.



Those living on the southern end of the storm were faced with a dangerous mix of freezing rain and sleet and Arkansas was on an ice storm warning.

"Heavy snow along with some blowing and drifting snow will result in very poor visibility at times and cause snow packed and treacherous driving conditions," the weather service warned.

"The most significant ice accumulations are expected on trees, power lines and untreated highways."

The governor of Missouri declared a state of emergency as the storm lashed the mid-western state with a dangerous mix of ice and as much as 10 inches (25 centimeters) of snow overnight.

"Missouri stands ready to help communities in need and to deploy the resources to keep folks safe," Governor Jay Nixon said. "I urge all Missourians to keep a close eye on the weather and avoid unnecessary travel."

The state of Kansas shuttered government offices Thursday to keep non-essential workers off the treacherous roads and scores of

Global tablet sales up 78% in 2012: survey



WASHINGTON (AFP) - The global market for tablet computers surged 78.4 percent last year, with 128 million of the devices shipped, a survey showed Thursday.

Research firm IDC said tablets made up 10.7 percent of the global market last year for "smart connected devices," which include smartphones, and portable and desktop PCs.

Overall, the market for these devices grew 29 percent to 1.2 billion, according to IDC, with growth in tablets and smartphones -- which saw a 46 percent rise -- offsetting declines in PC sales.

Although tablet sales sizzled, they have not yet eclipsed sales of traditional PCs yet, the figures showed. Some analysts say that could happen in the next year or two.

IDC data showed a 3.4 percent drop in portable PC sales to 202 million and a 4.1 percent decline in desktop PC sales to 148.4 million.

These were dwarfed by the

722 million smartphones sold last year, a figure which was previously released.

Smartphones and tablets are growing at a pace that PCs cannot keep up with, said IDC analyst Ryan Reith.

In the overall market for connected devices, Samsung rose to the top position with at least 20 percent of the market in each category, and an overall market share of 20.8 percent, overtaking last year's leader Apple.

Apple held 18.2 percent of the market for 2012, up from 16.3 percent in 2011. The maker of the iPhone and iPad saw 44 percent growth for the year but was unable to keep pace with South Korea's Samsung, which more than doubled its sales.

The number three company was China-based Lenovo with a 6.5 percent market share in all devices, followed by US-based Hewlett-Packard (4.8 percent) and Dell (3.2 percent).



business owners and school officials followed suit.

The blizzard was so intense in some areas that snow plows were getting stuck and ambulances had trouble getting patients to hospitals.

"The roads throughout Wichita (Kansas) are snow-packed and many are impassable," the Sedgwick county emergency management office warned on its website. "Please stay home and off the roads unless absolutely necessary."

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COMICS

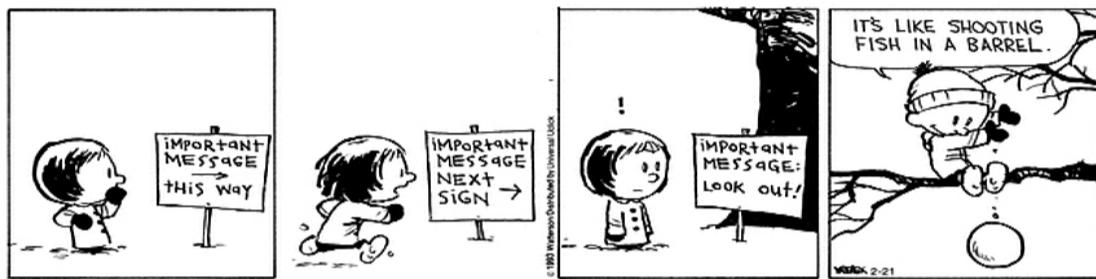
PICKLES



MOMMA



CALVIN and HOBBS



CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

- Not punctual
- Primer boy
- Herbal wrap provider
- Gershwin and Levin
- Raison d'__
- Came in first
- Mob member
- Stopover location
- Clothes
- Blake or Plummer
- Pre-Soviet commune
- Temperate
- Pioneers' transports
- Mrs. Kowalski
- Idaho's most populous county
- Hearer
- Lobbying group target
- Throngs
- Scottish Celt
- Taxi
- Like Crazy Eddie's prices
- Baltimore bird
- Camp bed
- Rascal
- "Air Force __"
- French state
- Mansard part
- Oslo's land:

abbr.

- Former jet-setting jets
- Svelte

DOWN

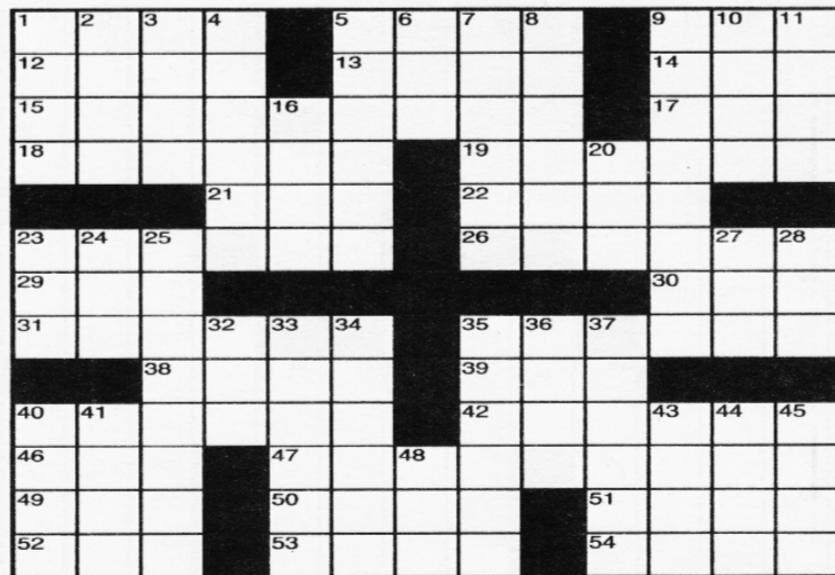
- Turkish coin
- "How now! __?" ("Hamlet")
- Finesse
- Canine breed
- Discourages
- Resident: suffix
- Combines butter and sugar
- Miss Piggy's prince

charming

- Charlatan
- Frog's stomping grounds
- Paquin of "True Blood"
- Joyce's land
- Microbrewery brew
- "Till There __ You"
- Refreshing drink
- Hood
- Combines butter and sugar
- Becomes rigid

BAD GUYS

- Makes into an "in"
- Merit-badge earners
- Alert
- Withstands
- Religious picture
- Words of warning to a tot
- Aloud
- One of Dinah's avenging brothers
- Au or Co: abbr.
- Part of a stable meal



SOLUTION



Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9. A number is never repeated in a row or column. In addition, every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9.



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Twelve Step Meetings
24 hours helpline 583-8989

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and Drug Addiction
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SOS TELEAYUDO SOS

Telephone Helpline
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Mon.-Thu. 9 p.m.-12 midn.
Fri.-Sun. 9 p.m.-2 a.m.

CAS MARIE

Alzheimer's Day
Care Center
Tel: 5696910

Important Telephone Numbers

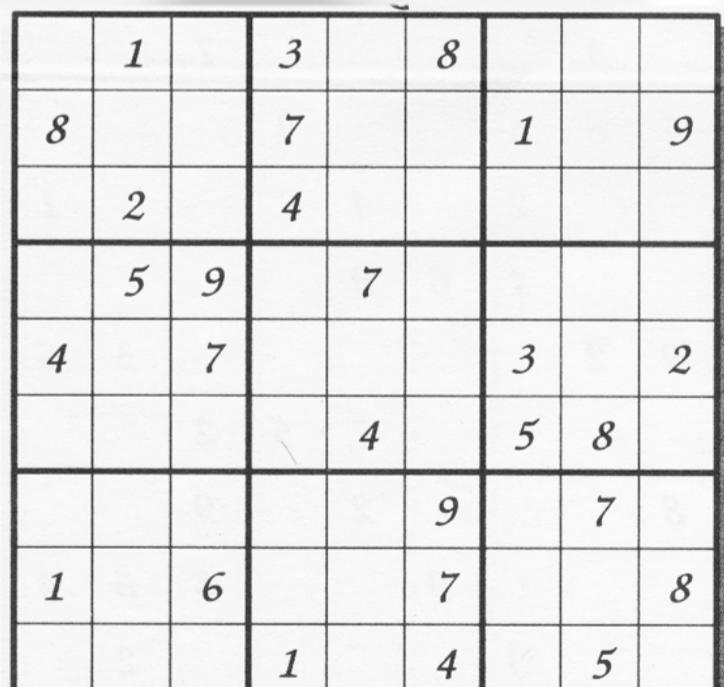
HOSPITAL
Horacio Oduber Hospital
Tel. 587-4300

EMERGENCY
Telephone 911
POLICE HQS
Telephone 100

TAXI
C.V. TAS
587-1998, 587-5900
In Oranjestad:
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Walmart raises dividend as profits rise

NEW YORK (AFP) - Global retailing giant Walmart Thursday announced increased quarterly profits and a higher dividend, even as it pointed to some US and foreign challenges in the near term.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. reported net income of \$5.6 billion in the fiscal fourth quarter ended January 31, up 8.6 percent from the year-ago period.

Revenues rose 3.9 percent from the year-ago period to \$127.9 billion.

The world's largest retailer raised its fiscal 2014 dividend by 18 percent to \$1.88 a share, compared with \$1.59 paid during fiscal year 2013.

Investors smiled on the report, sending shares 2.8 percent higher on a day in which the equity markets fell.

The profits came in above analyst forecasts, but a research note by Deutsche Bank observed that the earnings quality was "low" because much of the upside came from an unusually low tax rate in the quarter.

The company said it had benefited in the fourth quarter from a lower-than-expected effective tax rate, which fell to 27.7 percent from 30.9 percent a year earlier.

On a conference call, Walmart chief financial officer Charles Holley said the expected tax rate for fiscal 2014 will range between 32 and 33 percent.

Walmart also cautioned that February 2013 sales in the US have "started slower than planned, due, in large part, to the delay in income tax refunds," said Walmart US president Bill Simon.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer



Finance

Oil prices dive further on weak data, Fed minutes

LONDON (AFP) - Global oil prices slid Thursday as traders worried over poor economic data, a potential end to US stimulus measures, and signs of weaker-than-expected American crude demand, analysts said.

Brent North Sea crude for delivery in April fell \$1.57 to \$114.03 a barrel in late afternoon deals in London.

New York's main contract, light sweet crude for April tumbled \$2.20 to \$93.02 per barrel.

The market accelerated earlier losses after downbeat reports on US jobs and European business activity which compounded concerns about flagging global demand for energy.

The US government's Labor Department said initial jobless claims rose to 362,000 in the week ending February 16, more than the analyst estimate of 358,000.

Oil was already falling after minutes from the Federal Reserve's most recent meeting showed some members in favour of cutting short the \$85 billion-a-month bond-buying spree introduced last year to support the world's biggest economy.

The news, combined with speculation over a massive sell-off by an unnamed investment fund, had sent crude futures plunging by about \$2 on Wednesday.



BRUSSELS (AFP) - Some 30,000 to 40,000 people gathered in Brussels' city centre Thursday in a protest against austerity called by the country's three major trade unions. Among the protesters -- estimated by police at 30,000 and by organisers at 40,000 -- were workers facing lay-offs from a Ford auto plant in Genk and an ArcelorMittal facility in Liege. "Pensioners, the unemployed and the sick don't even have the minimum needed to be able to adjust their revenues," said CSC trade union leader Claude Rolin. The trade unions were protesting against the government's decision to freeze wages as well social welfare payments and the minimum wage. Although unions did not call a general strike, public transport was snarled both in the Flemish-speaking north and French-speaking south. Buses were badly hit in Brussels but trams and the underground rail system were running at 75 to 80 percent during the morning rush-hour.



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Mobile users call on Obama to defend 'jailbreaking'

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The White House will soon have to dial in a response to a petition asking that mobile phone users be allowed to switch locked devices to new carriers, a process known as "jailbreaking."

An obscure official's decision that the "jailbreaking" of phones violates US copyright law has generated a flurry of protests from civil liberties and digital rights activists.

A petition submitted to the White House generated more than 100,000 signatures as of Thursday, passing the threshold for a required response from the administration of President Barack Obama.

The issue arose from a ruling by the Librarian of Congress stating that those who circumvent the software protecting a mobile phone locked to a single carrier would no longer be exempt from copyright law as of January 26.

The decision could affect the widespread practice of "jailbreaking," or freeing a device sold by one carrier to be used on another, or while travelling overseas.

As a result, said the petition submitted to the White House website, "consumers will be

forced to pay exorbitant roaming fees to make calls while traveling abroad. It reduces consumer choice, and decreases the resale value of devices that consumers have paid for in full."

"We ask that the White House ask the Librarian of Congress to rescind this decision, and failing that, champion a bill that makes unlocking permanently legal," the petition states.

Mitch Stoltz of the Electronic Frontier Foundation said the issue remains complex, and that while it does not make people who unlock phones criminals, it opens the door to potential law-suits.

Stoltz said the law, known as the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, should be updated to fix the problem.

"The law was supposed to protect creative works, but it's often been misused by electronics makers to block competition and kill markets for used goods," he said.

"And no creative work is involved here: Wireless carriers aren't worried about 'piracy' of the software on their phones, they're worried about people re-selling subsidized phones at a profit."



PORTO (AFP) - A handout picture taken and released on February 20, 2013 by the Portuguese police shows counterfeit banknotes seized by police in Porto. The Portuguese authorities have arrested a 46-year-old man and seized 1,901 counterfeit banknotes of 200 euros for a total of 380,200 euros, saying it was "the largest seizure of counterfeit euros worldwide," the police announced today.

Brickell Bay Sand Beach lounge featuring live music this Sunday



--Aruba's newest lounge, Brickell Bay Sand Beach, in Palm Beach, created quite a stir with its recent opening, revealing a chic, unique environment that has strongly attracted island fashionistas as a relaxed, elegant place to

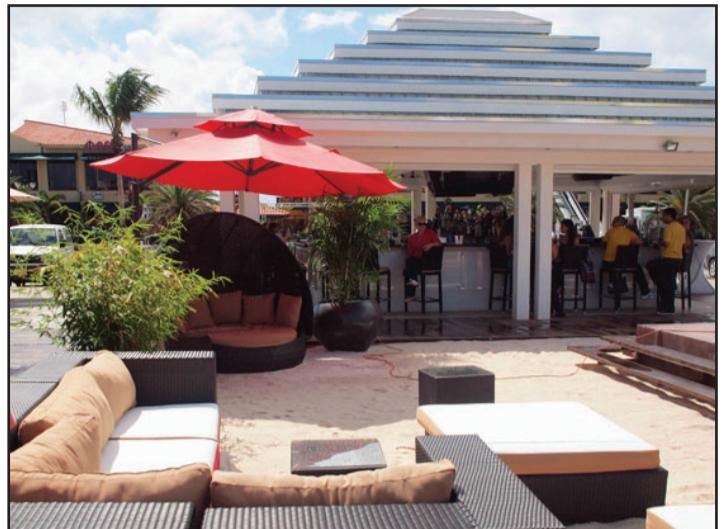


while away the evening hours.

The new eatery/nightclub has live music twice weekly, and this Sunday will feature on of the island's most popular and dynamic entertainers of the last decade, Marisela and the Aquarius Band. She is back on Aruba for a limited engagement and will be appearing every Sun-

day through January at Brickell Bay Sand Beach Lounge.

Marisela will be heating up Palm Beach for a very cool night each weekend beginning this Sunday, January 6, from 6:00 to 9:00 PM. This is a performer known for "bringing down the house," so don't miss this rare opportunity to enjoy some great entertainment and discover Aruba's most stylish new nightspot.



Hour" on the weekends from 10:00 to 11:00 PM.

Brickell Bay Sand Beach lounge is located directly across the street from the South Beach Center. If you are wondering what is new and hip on Aruba, this is it!

'Musty' 85th Academy Awards rebranded as 'The Oscars'



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - They are the 85th Academy Awards, the climax of Hollywood's awards season, this coming weekend -- except officially they're not. This year, they've been rebranded to "The Oscars."

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), which organizes Tinseltown's biggest awards, did not confirm the change revealed by show co-producer Neil Meron, who said "85th Academy Awards" was too "musty."

But it seems it's true, for this year at least: references to Academy Awards and that it's the 85th show -- a significant anniversary, one might have thought -- quietly disappeared from official AMPAS materials a few weeks ago.

"We're rebranding it," Meron told entertainment news website TheWrap in an

interview with co-producer Craig Zadan this week, days before Hollywood's finest take to the red carpet at the Dolby Theatre on Sunday.

"We're not calling it 'The 85th annual Academy Awards,' which keeps it mired somewhat in a musty way. It's called 'The Oscars,'" he said, adding that he believed the new approach would continue in years to come.

An AMPAS spokeswoman declined to confirm the change, but said: "We use Academy Awards and the Oscars interchangeably. We'll begin considering next year's marketing campaign in the spring."

Last year's Oscars poster was quite clearly emblazoned with "The 84th Academy Awards." This year's shows a picture of smiling host Seth MacFarlane under "The Oscars," in gold.

The Oscars organizers are widely understood to be targeting a younger audience for their annual show -- and "Family Guy" creator MacFarlane could be part of that strategy.

Two years ago a clear get-the-young-viewers ploy, with actors James Franco and Anne Hathaway jointly fronting the show, was widely criticized, with Franco's wooden performance drawing particular scorn.

Last year Eddie Murphy was initially set to host but pulled out at the last minute after an embarrassing gay slur row involving one of the producers, and the Academy fell back on veteran Billy Crystal, who hosted for a ninth time.

Nominees:

Best Picture: *A m o u r*, *Argo*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Django Unchained*, *Les Misérables*, *Life of Pi*, *Lincoln*, *Silver Linings Playbook*, *Zero Dark Thirty*

Best Actor in a Leading Role: Bradley Cooper, Daniel Day-Lewis, Hugh Jackman, Joaquin Phoenix, Denzel Washington

Best Actress in a Leading Role: Jessica Chastain, Jennifer Lawrence, Emmanuelle Riva, Quvenzhané Wallis, Naomi Watts

Best Director:

Amour (Michael Haneke), *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (Benh Zeitlin), *Life of Pi* (Ang Lee), *Silver Linings Playbook* (David O. Russell), *Lincoln* (Steven Spielberg)

Big Bird repays Obamas with healthy eating ad



WASHINGTON (AFP) - Big Bird is back as a player in big time US politics.

Mitt Romney wanted to get rid of him, but after a reprieve following the Republican's election defeat, the towering Sesame Street puppet has signed up to endorse First Lady Michelle Obama's nutrition and fitness campaign.

The fluffy yellow character known to generations of US kids is seen jogging in the East Room of the White House and checking out a bowl of fruit and vegetables in the presidential kitchen in two new public service ads.

"Gee, I bet you could get just anything you want in this kitchen," Bird Bid said in one of the ads, before remarking "those look good" when the First Lady points out some crunchy vegetables.

The ads will be distributed to 320 public broadcasting stations as part of the First Lady's "Let's Move!" campaign which is designed to fight obesity and improve the diets and health of American kids.

The First Lady will kick off a national tour next week to mark the three year anniversary of the program.

"Eating healthy is easy and it's fun and delicious too," Michelle Obama says in one of the ads.

The use of Big Bird may be seen as one last jab at Romney by the Obamas after the famous Muppet emerged as a punch line during last year's presidential election.

Romney said in a debate in Denver that he liked Big Bird but pledged to cut a government subsidy for public television where he appears, as part of efforts to trim the deficit.

President Barack Obama's team seized on the remark to ridicule Romney after the president badly wobbled in the debate.

"Mitt Romney knows it's not Wall Street you have to worry about, it's Sesame Street," one Obama ad said, jokingly describing Big Bird as an "evil genius" towering over financial felons like Ken Lay and Bernie Madoff.

5 Burgers Aruba: Now your best breakfast bargain!



--A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an inter-

nationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy,

made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at 7 a.m., patrons can now order 2 eggs any style, (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) toast and coffee with unlimited refills for the special introductory price of only \$4.49, (\$5.48, with bacon) or All-you-can-eat pancakes, for \$6.99, again, with free refills on fresh coffee. Breakfast is served until 11 a.m. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on; after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie; so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda,



Farmer's or Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with Aarons' secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jala-peño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of

fries is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish at night; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district at now extra cost for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by



the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community

of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facil-

ties such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the

least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

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Tennis: Serena, Azarenka penalised for late Dubai pullouts

DUBAI (AFP) - Serena Williams, the world number one, and Victoria Azarenka, the only unbeaten leading player on the women's tour this year, have been penalised for their late withdrawals from the Dubai Open.

Williams, who had a bad back and withdrew on Wednesday, has had \$50,000 forfeited from the WTA's bonus pool, and zero points imposed for one tournament on her world ranking calculation.

Azarenka, who had a bruised heel and withdrew on



Monday, had \$100,000 forfeited from the WTA's bonus pool and zero points imposed for one tournament on her rankings calculation.

Azarenka's stronger punishment reflects the fact that hers was the second successive time she had pulled out from the Dubai Open after the entry deadline.

Tournament Director Salah Tahlak said: "I had a conference call with the WTA in Florida and they are taking action against Azarenka, relating to her second successive withdrawal. There is also action against Williams."

The incidents are a setback for the WTA Roadmap's campaign to reduce the number of player withdrawals, something it appears to have done successfully over the past three years.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that Dubai Duty Free, the sponsors of the Dubai Open, are also sponsors of the WTA tour.

The forfeitures however seem of little financial consequence when the bonus pool total is as much as \$4,900,000, and when these two players also earn many millions of dollars a year from prize money and sponsorships.

The zero points imposed is also unlikely to have much, if any, adverse effect on the ranking of either, when calculated alongside their many successes.

Williams, who took over from Azarenka as world number one on Monday, became sure of keeping the top spot at least until the start of April as soon as the Belarusian withdrew.

Football: Games fixed in Spain claims league official



MADRID (AFP) - Vice-president of the Spanish Professional League Javier Tebas has claimed games in Spain have been fixed.

Tebas' claims come just weeks after an Europol investigation cited 680 fixed matches across the world, none of which took place in Spain.

However, Tebas said Thursday he believes the problems in Spain are more closely linked to ensuring results towards the end of the season than with the gambling syndicates highlighted by the Europol investigation.

"Yes, there have been games fixed in Spain and you know it too," he told the Cadena Cope radio station. "We cannot deny the fact it is very serious. It is a minority, but very serious."

"In Spain the fix is not linked to betting, but to the standings at the end of the season. It could have been just two or three games, but they are important."

Tebas even went as far to say he had spoken to a player who had been approached

about fixing games.

"Players or directors will tell you, but they don't want to go to court. A player in the First Division has told me and we don't have to deny that it exists."

"An important informant told me that a teammate of his had told him there had been fixed matches."

"Whoever we catch fixing games will go to jail."

Tebas also addressed the perilous financial position of a number of Spanish clubs and believes Deportivo la Coruna could go out of business if they get relegated this season.

The Galicians are currently bottom of the table, eight points from safety, and entered administration in January.

"In a few months or a year a club could disappear. I see two clubs in a very difficult situation."

"Deportivo could be a candidate in two or three years if they don't fix their debt. A debt in the First Division you can maintain but if you go down it is more difficult."

Sport

Football: Pele ready to cut back after hip op



SAO PAULO (AFP) - Brazilian legend Pele is preparing to start limiting his professional schedule of engagements as the 72-year-old gets over hip replacement surgery, O Estado de Sao Paulo daily reported on Thursday.

Pele, born Edson Arantes do Nascimento, has spent as much as six months a year on commercial activities but is ready to cut that back extensively from 2016 - the year Rio will stage South America's first Olympics.

He recently allowed the Legends 10 LLC agency to represent him exclusively for endorsement and product licensing and also personal appearances.

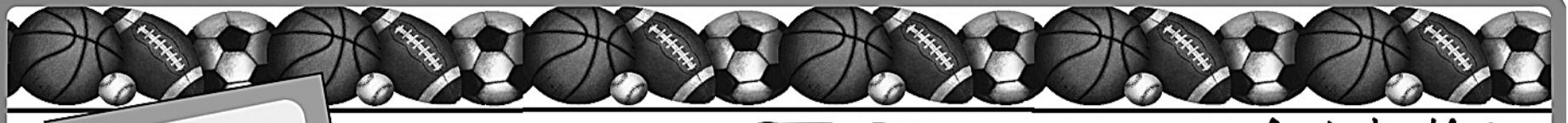
"With Legends, we shall progressively rein in Pele's travelling programme. Before, he would spend on average 180 days abroad a year. In the first year of this new agreement I have managed to bring that down to 83 days," Jose Fornos Rodrigues, a veteran of 45 years representing Pele, told the paper.

Pele will before then play an active role as Brazil's honorary ambassador of football for the 2014 World Cup, which the five-times champions will be hosting for the first time since 1950.

The former Santos and New York Cosmos star netted twice in Brazil's first final win over hosts Sweden in 1958 as a teenager then scored again in the 1970 final thrashing of Italy in Mexico.

On Wednesday, Pele, whose views still carry weight among fans, criticised the showings of youngster Neymar and expressed fears his country will not do well at next year's World Cup on home soil.

He said that the current team "has no structure, no harmony."



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Tennis: Anger drives Wozniacki into Dubai semi-finals

DUBAI (AFP) - Former world number one Caroline Wozniacki reached the Dubai Open semi-finals on Thursday with a 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 win over Marion Bartoli, shrugging off a code violation in the process.

Wozniacki was warned for illegal coaching as the match boiled up to a thrilling finish, apparently because she was talking to her father Piotr.

Wozniacki will tackle Petra Kvitova for a place in the final after the 2011 Wimbledon champion underlined her new status as the unofficial tournament favourite by ending the title defence of Agnieszka Radwanska.

The Czech Republic player again showed that she is in her best form since winning her

only Grand Slam title 19 months ago, out-hitting and out-serving the third-seeded Pole, 6-2, 6-4.

It followed her victory over former French Open champion Ana Ivanovic on Wednesday -- and her near-success against Serena Williams last week in Qatar -- and was her best win in 15 months.

Roberta Vinci and Sara Errani, the world's top doubles pair, will put their lifelong friendship to one side on Friday when they clash in the other semi-final.

Vinci, who had accounted for one former Grand Slam winner and one seeded player already, beat the seventh-seeded former US Open champion, Samantha Stosur



6-2, 6-4 to reach the last four.

Errani, who had played one long three-set match already, had another, beating Nadia Petrova, the former world number three from Russia, 6-4, 0-6, 6-3.

Vinci said it would be like "playing my sister," and Errani pointed out how strange it might feel as they spend about 300 days together during the year.

Football: UEFA Cup 2013



PARIS (AFP) - A last-gasp goal from Mousa Dembele booked English Premier League side Tottenham a place in the last 16 of the Europa League on Thursday as he rescued a 3-2 aggregate win over French hosts Lyon. Spurs, who now face Inter Milan, had won the opening encounter 2-1 but trailed for much of the match to a 17th-minute goal from Maxime Gonalons before a cracking drive from Dembele rescued the Londoners and saved them from an exit on away goals. Joining Spurs in the next round were fellow English travellers Newcastle, who thanked Shola Ameobi's third European goal of the season from the penalty spot for a 1-0 win at Metalist Kharkiv, the Ukrainians who held the Magpies to a goalless stalemate on Tyneside last week.

Golf: Kuchar, Day finish off wins at snow-hit Match Play

MARANA (AFP) - Matt Kuchar, Jason Day and Bo Van Pelt polished off first-round victories Thursday as the WGC Match Play Championship at last got underway after a lengthy snow delay.

Kuchar had held a 3-up advantage over Japan's Hiroyuki Fujita when play was suspended on Wednesday afternoon.

On Thursday he parred the 15th and 16th holes to complete a 3 and 2 victory.

He was to play the winner of the first-round match between Sergio Garcia and Thongchai Jaidee, which had been extended to extra holes.

Australian Jason Day also booked his second-round berth, with a 6 and 5 win over Zach Johnson.

Van Pelt defeated Australian John Senden 6 and 5, needing just one hole after

Thursday's restart to end his match with a par at the par-five 13th. Senden bogeyed the hole after a tee shot into desert native area.

Play on Thursday was delayed by more than four hours as officials and golfers waited for the snow that struck on Wednesday to melt.

All but nine of the 32 matches were on the golf course Wednesday when the freak storm dropped almost two inches of snow on the Ritz Carlton Golf Club course at Dove Mountain.

World number one Rory McIlroy and 14-time major champion Tiger Woods were among those who didn't get a chance to tee off on Wednesday.

McIlroy was to take on Ireland's Shane Lowry in the first round while Woods, a three-time winner of the World Golf Championships event, took on Charles Howell.

Football: Barca defeat leaves La Liga questioned

MADRID (AFP) - Following Barcelona's shock 2-0 defeat to AC Milan on Wednesday night, Spain has been left with the realistic threat of not having a team progress to the Champions League quarter-finals for the first time in eight years.

Goals from Kevin-Prince Boateng and Sulley Muntari gave the Italians an unexpectedly healthy advantage to take to the Nou Camp in three weeks time and there was dismay amongst the Spanish

press on Thursday that the country's domination on the continent in recent years may be coming to an end.

For once, the Barcelona

sports dailies Sport and Mundo Deportivo agreed, with the former highlighting the 'worst Barca' and 'worst referee' as the causes for defeat.

And whilst there was some cause for complaint at Scottish referee Craig Thomson's decision not to rule out Milan's first goal for handball and at the uneven San Siro playing surface, the most galling aspect for most Barca players was that the team was essentially to blame.

The feeling of deflation is not restricted to Catalonia, however, as all four of Spain's participants in the last-16 have failed to shine.

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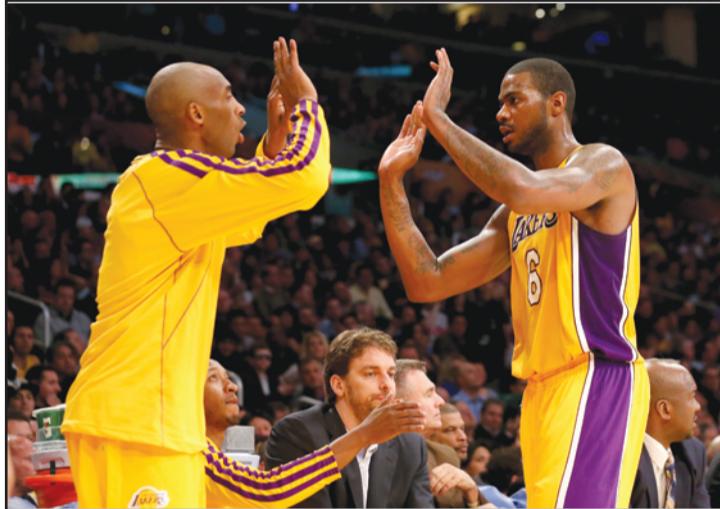
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NBA: Lakers win one for ex-owner Buss



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - The Los Angeles Lakers won in their first game since their long-time owner Jerry Buss died, beating their mighty rivals the Boston Celtics 113-99 behind 24 points from Dwight Howard on Wednesday.

Howard also had 12 rebounds and Kobe Bryant finished with 16 points and seven assists as the Lakers celebrated their bittersweet victory over the Celtics, whom they have met 12 times in the NBA finals.

"It was personally very important," Bryant said of Wednesday's victory. "I know how much it meant to him every time we played the Celtics so this was an important game."

The night of tributes to Buss, who was 80 years old, included a new memorial patch on the Lakers' uniforms with the initials "JB". A white board was placed outside the main entrance of Staples Center arena where fans could write sympathetic messages before heading into the game.

Inside the arena there was a short video tribute to Buss -- played on the giant screen before the game -- followed by a speech from Bryant and then a moment of silence. Buss died on Monday due to kidney failure.

"On Monday we lost who

we all know to be the greatest owner in sports," Bryant said. "He was a brilliant and incredible owner and an even better person with a great heart.

"We were all spoiled by his vision and his drive to win year after year.

"One thing we could always count on was the great Dr. Jerry Buss looking over this franchise from his box."

Former Laker icon Magic Johnson said he hoped Buss's children do not try to unload the team.

"He meant so much to me. His beautiful smile and warm heart," Johnson said.

"His door was open to anybody. When you lose legends like Jerry Buss where do you go from here? I hope his kids keep the franchise in the Buss family because that is what their father would have wanted. I hope his kids never sell the team."

Earl Clark had 14 points and 16 rebounds and Steve Nash finished with 14 points and seven assists for the Lakers, who have won 10 of their last 15 games.

Nash now has 10,144 assists as he passed Johnson for sole possession of fourth place on the career list.

Howard said he was starting to feel better on the court because he is working on his conditioning.

"I am playing with lot of energy and doing the best I can on defence," Howard said. "I been trying to get in the best shape I can. I just want to get into better shape."

Paul Pierce scored 26 points for Boston who have now lost

two straight to begin a five-game western road trip.

Boston dropped to 0-7 on the road against Western Conference opponents this season.

Los Angeles led 36-27 after the first quarter and seized a 64-55 lead at halftime before

blowing the game open with a 10-2 run to begin the third quarter.

Clark finished off one burst of scoring with a dunk to make it 75-57. The Lakers biggest lead reached 22 points in the fourth quarter.



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